

Message Text

SECRET

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46

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 AID-05 DPW-01

IO-10 EUR-12 NEA-09 PM-03 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 L-02

H-02 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PRS-01 /085 W

----- 035484

O P 161030Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5432

INFO SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA IMMEDIATE

USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC HONOLULU IMMEDIATE

USSAG NKP THAILAND IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY THERAN PRIORITY

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

S E C R E T SAIGON 5109

NOFORN

WARNING--SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES AND METHODS INVOLVED/
NO FOREIGN DISSEMINATION

E.O. 11652: XGDS2 DECLASSIFICATION DATE IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE

TAGS: MOPS MARR VS

SUBJ: HIGHLIGHTS OF NVA OFFENSIVE--SUMMARY FOR PERIOD ENDING
NOON APRIL 16

1. GENERAL

(NOFORN) THE GVN SUFFERED A SERIOUS SETBACK APRIL 16 WHEN THE
CITY AND AIRBASE OF PHAN RANG, NINH THUAN PROVINCE CAME UNDER
HEAVY COMMUNIST ATTACK AND ARE PRESUMED LOST. ACCORDING TO AERIAL

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SURVELIANCE, THE CITY OF PHAN RANG IS AFIRE AND THE AIRBASE APPEARS

TO BE ABANDONED. THE ACTION IN LONG KHANH HAS SHIFTED TO THE WEST OF XUAN LOC, WHERE ELEMENTS OF THE 52ND REGT. TOOK A 1000 ROUND ABF FOLLOWED BY GROUND ATTACK LATE APRIL 15. IN THE DELTA, THERE IS SUBSTANTIAL ACTIVITY ALONG ROUTE 4 IN DINH TUONG, AND TWO A-37 AIRCRAFT WERE SHOT DOWN OVER THE NORTHEAST CORNER OF DINH TUONG APRIL 15.

MR3

AT 0830 HOURS APRIL 16, NVA UNITS SUPPORTED BY APPROXIMATELY 50 T-54 TANKS ATTACKED PHAN RANG AIRFIELD. THE DEFENDING ELEMENTS, THE 2ND AIRBORNE BRIGADE AND THE 31ST RANGER GROUP, REPULSED THE INITIAL ATTACK, DESTROYING 13 TANKS IN THE BATTLE. LATER IN THE DAY, HOWEVER, THE 31ST RANGERS WERE OVERRUN, AND THE AIRBORNE REPORTED THEY HAD SUFFERED HEAVY CASUALTIES. VNAF AIRCRAFT, INCLUDING HELICOPTER GUNSHIPS, WERE PROVIDING AIR SUPPORT, AND AT LEAST ONE VNN VESSEL WAS PROVIDING OFF-SHORE FIRE SUPPORT. TANKS HAVE ENTERED THE CITY OF PHAN RANG, AND THE CITY IS ABLAZE. THE AIRFIELD APPEARS TO BE ABANDONED, AND AT LEAST TWO A-37'S AND FOUR C-119'S ARE ON THE GROUND. RADIO CONTACT WITH THE DEFENDERS OF PHAN RANG WAS LOST AT 1100 HOURS. (END NOFORN).

IN LONG KHANH, THE FOCUS OF ACTION WAS IN THE WESTERN PART OF THE PROVINCE NEAR THE BIEN HOA/LONG KHANH BORDER. THE NVA STRUCK THE 52ND REGT A FEW KMS NORTHWEST OF THE ROUTE 1/20 ROAD JUNCTION IN THE LATE AFTERNOON OF APRIL 15 AND RADIO CONTACT WAS LOST BY 1800 HOURS. THE 52ND HAS REPORTED THAT, IN A 1,000 ROUND ABF WHICH PRECEDED HEAVY GROUND ATTACK, THE REGT LOST EIGHT PIECES OF 105MM ARTILLERY AND FOUR 155 GUNS DESTROYED. MR3 HQ FEARS THAT SUBSTANTIAL PARTS OF THE 1ST AND 3RD BNS OF THE REGT HAVE BEEN BADLY HURT. THE 2ND BN OF THE 52ND HAS BEEN ORDERED TO PULL BACK EASTWARD TOWARD THE BIEN HOA BORDER TO HELP COLLECT RETREATING ELEMENTS OF THE OTHER TWO BNS.

30 TO 40 ROUNDS OF ARTILLERY, SAID TO BE CONFIRMED 130MM, STRUCK BIEN HOA BASE JUST AFTER 0700 HOURS APRIL 16. THE ROUNDS DAMAGED BOTH RUNWAYS AND THE CENTER TAXIWAY SUFFICIENTLY TO MAKE THEM UNUSABLE, KNOCKED OUT ALL POWER ON THE EAST HALF OF THE BASE, DAMAGED SEVEN F-5A'S 40 TO 60 PERCENT AND ONE A-37

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40 PERCENT, AND BURNED A CHEMICAL STORAGE AREA. CASUALTIES WERE TWO AIRMEN KIA AND THREE WIA. TWO ROUNDS FELL IN A CIVILIAN AREA OPPOSITE MR3 HQ (ON THE SOUTHEAST EDGE OF THE BASE) DESTROYING THREE CIVILIAN HOUSES. THE AIRFIELD RESUMED OPERATIONAL STATUS AT 1400 HOURS APRIL 16.

MR4

THE NUMBER AND INTENSITY OF INCIDENTS IN THE DELTA DROPPED
APRIL 15, WITH THE ONLY AREA OF MAJOR ACTIVITY BEING DINH TUONG.
BOTH ARVN REGULAR FORCES AND TERRITORIALS HAVE REPORTED CNTACTS
THERE DURING THE PAST 24 HOURS. TWO A-37 AIRCRAFT WERE SHOT
DOWN BY SA-7 FIRE IN SUPPORT OF THE OPERATIONS IN DINH TUONG.

ICCS

AS OF APRIL 16, ICCS STRENGTHS WERE 21 IRANIANS, 32
INDONESIANS, 81 HUNGARIANS AND 102 POLES. ACCORDING TO RVN
DELEGATION, 35 HUNGARIANS ARE SCHEDULED TO DEPART ON APRIL 22
AND 75 POLES ON APRIL 26. ACCORDING TO INDODEL DCM SAMIL,
INDODEL WILL REDUCE TO 10 OR 11 BY MAY BUT WILL MAINTAIN
CAPABILITY TO RE-EXPEND DELEGATION QUICKLY.
MARTIN

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NNN

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